

EDUCATION THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE.



A LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL, M.P.

ON THE RESOLUTIONS

FOR ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION,

SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT, MARCH 6, 1856.

BY

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“What is the political work which we are endeavouring to promote? It is no other than the instinctive effort of every people towards liberty. And what is liberty, whose name can make every heart beat, and which can agitate the world, but the union of all liberties, the liberty of conscience, of instruction, of association, of the press, of locomotion, of labour, and of exchange; in other words, the free exercise, for all, of all the inoffensive faculties; and again, in other words, the destruction of all despotisms, even of legal despotism, and the reduction of law to its only rational sphere, which is, to regulate the individual right of legitimate defence, or to repress injustice?”

BASTIAT.

MY LORD,

The work of Popular Education originated with the people, and all classes are now agreed in promoting its extension and improvement. Whether their efforts shall be superseded, and Public Instruction become a function of the State is the only question on which differences of opinion prevail. The Legislature has not succeeded in carrying any general measure; and discussion has only rendered more palpable the difficulties of State interference. Yet, undismayed by the failures of others, your Lordship has brought forward the boldest scheme hitherto submitted to the approval of the nation, "trusting that the time is becoming more propitious to the adoption of a system of education which shall place this country on a more equal footing with the other enlightened nations of the world."

In what respects is the present "a more propitious time" for imitating nations who commit to the State the moulding of the popular mind? Is there any diminution in the zeal and activity of those who, from convictions of duty, are seeking to stimulate and aid their countrymen in a matter closely identified with their highest interests? The revolution your Lordship has witnessed in public sentiment on the subject of education, now deemed undesirable by no one—the reports of Educational Societies—the activity of private individuals or local organizations, in every direction—the increase and improvement of school literature and educational appliances—the extent to which questions relating to school management and methods of teaching are discussed in teachers' asso-

ciations and periodicals—the rise, within a recent period, of two distinct forms of benevolent enterprise, Ragged and Reformatory Schools,—lead to no such conclusion. Has the interest of parents in the instruction of their children declined? Where can a school be opened which is not readily tried with the hope of securing advantages greater than have been before available? Has not the attempt to secure increased payments for an education of better quality been generally successful? Is not the purchase of books by scholars—a plan which ensures results previously unknown in primary instruction—becoming a general practice? Is not the demand for skilled labour rapidly increasing? Is there nothing significant in the acceptance, by eminent manufacturers, of the certificates of Mechanics' Institutions,—in the examinations for the India and Civil Service, and in their confidently anticipated extension to all departments of the State? These are the sure indications of the progress of society—the developments of a natural growth, which will place this country in proud contrast to other nations, and teach them, that as a free people, we have outgrown a state of pupilage, and by virtue of this freedom can accomplish for ourselves results far more valuable than are achieved by them, through the operations of law and the busy intermeddling of official functionaries.

“A more propitious time,” when the nation is emerging from a struggle which has increased taxation, raised the price of all articles of consumption, embarrassed trade, crippled commerce, and impoverished the country! “A more propitious time!” If in the conduct of war, which necessarily comes within the sphere of Government, mismanagement, speculation, tyrannous routine, formality, and precedent have had undisputed sway, who can find ground for expecting in an ordinary condition of affairs, when the pre-occupation of the public mind by the pursuits of private enterprise diminishes vigilance, that the errors and evils we have witnessed and deplored will be avoided in a department undertaking the difficult and delicate task of furnishing to the masses of the community the means of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement? “A more



propitious time!" Has the system of centralization of late years so largely adopted produced results which warrant a further extension of the process? Have the regulation of railways, and sanitary schemes at length fully developed in the Board of Health, created confidence in a Government by officials? Or, to refer to a measure bearing a strong resemblance to your Lordship's—that relating to parochial cemeteries,—has this scheme secured the harmonious co-operation of different parties—has it involved no extravagant expenditure, no party contests, no sectarian rivalry, no ecclesiastical domination? Who can fail to see that the question of education on which such differences of opinion exist, must create in a much more exaggerated degree these evils; and that to the strifes of parties will be sacrificed the well-being of the young, the claims of religious truth, and the highest interests of society? "A more propitious time!" Doubtless the operations of the Minutes of Council, extending over fifteen years, administered with an annual grant which has now reached £375,000, and having under control a large body of teachers, pupil-teachers, the officers of Training Institutions, inspectors, and a large staff of officials in Whitehall, ought to have curbed ere this the independence of the nation, and rendered easy the work of the statesman. But it is to be hoped that the leaven has not permeated society to the extent imagined, and that enough of the ancient spirit yet lives to assert the will and power to manage what it can best do by free action, refusing to surrender to the control of Government what interest no less than duty confides to it as a sacred trust. And should the time prove, as your Lordship imagines, "more propitious," a triumph will have been gained furnishing little cause for exultation—a triumph won by the stealthy operations of a scheme which interferes with free competition, pauperises the spirit of the community, and substitutes for healthy, stimulating influences, premiums on subserviency to official authority—a triumph which centralization inevitably secures, but which involves the sacrifice of what has made us a people respected in the earth.

"We must, on this occasion," says your Lordship, "waive

the proud ambition which Milton claimed for his country, when he said that England must not ‘forget her precedence in teaching the nations how to live.’” What! can we not teach America to put away from her the accursed thing—slavery? Can we not teach every nation in Europe a lesson of political virtue and steadfastness, the value of a free press, and of an extending representative system? Can we not show the power of free, spontaneous association, since among us “there is scarcely any great movement or public work of which the roots are not to be sought in that principle?” Who can forget the calm attitude of our country when a few years since a revolutionary spirit swept over Europe and shook every dynasty? Did we not, when popular insurrection on the Continent, by the crimes it perpetrated, demonstrated the incapacity of the people for a larger measure of freedom, and re-established the miserable absolutism which now prevails—by loyalty to our Sovereign, and attachment to our institutions, and still more by the ability, without revolution or bloodshed, to enlarge the basis of our representative system,—“teach the nations how to live?”\*

“The Census of 1851,” your Lordship states, “shows that there were then, speaking generally, about 4,000,000 children and young persons between the ages of 5 and 15. The returns and observations of Mr. Horace Mann show that 2,000,000 of these were entered upon the books of schools, and that about 1,750,000 were in attendance. When, however, these numbers are further explained, it will be seen that they give a very fallacious representation of what is the present state of popular education. The number of those who are educated in schools which have been inspected by the Inspectors appointed by the Committee of Council, is little more than 500,000, or only  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of the number who are between the ages of 5 and 15. With regard to the rest, the

\* “In the broad glare of the revolutionary history of 1848; in that chaos of confusion, delusion, and dreams, where Socialist raved, and the infidel and the mob plundered, the leaders were the schoolmasters, and their scholars the masses.”—*A Letter to the Right Hon. S. H. Walpole, M.P.*, by J. C. Colquhoun, Esq.



numbers who are in attendance at dame schools of the lowest description, where they are receiving a nominal education, but are really not instructed, comprise a very considerable portion of those for whom credit is taken in the educational statistics."

This statement obviously implies, that, in estimating the state of education, little or no credit is to be given to uninspected schools. Is this the spirit in which the proposed scheme is to be carried out? Will it be the business of the sub-inspector to ignore the existence, or to disparage the efficiency, of schools which are independent of Government aid? Has there not been found an indisposition to place schools under inspection—an indisposition which has only been partially overcome by increased pecuniary inducements, and the influence of the machinery of the Committee of Council on education, operating in every part of the country, and having under its control thirty-five training institutions, from which are emanating teachers, interested in bringing their schools under the Minutes? A short time since, the Dowager Marchioness of Londonderry, in a deeply interesting address to nearly four thousand men employed in her collieries, observed,—“Your comforts, your homes, and your schools have been anxiously watched over. The latter have long enjoyed a proud pre-eminence; and although I have refused to place them under Government inspection and supervision, I know that they are well managed.” The British and Foreign School Society reports (1855) 213 schools, with 30,555 scholars, within ten miles of London; and of these the Minutes of Council 1854—5 state less than *one-fifth* to be under inspection. Of Church of England, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic Schools, a considerable number are not under inspection. The Baptists, according to the Census, had, in 1851, 131, and the Congregationalists 431 schools, and few, if any, of these are under inspection.\* The existence of schools sustained exclusively by children's payments and voluntary contributions, in spite of the unfair competition of schools largely aided by public

\* Sir John Pakington stated, in the debate, that only 5000, out of 49,000 schools, are under inspection.

funds, will be accepted by candid minds as a presumptive proof of efficiency. There is nothing marvellous in the continuance of institutions which are independent of popular support long after their utility has ceased; but such as depend on the hard earnings of poverty, and the aid of benevolence, must become extinct when they cease to offer an equivalent to those who sustain them.

“I believe,” says your Lordship, “that there are at the head of schools 8000 Church of England teachers who do not receive more than £28 a-year; and that there is a great number of other persons, women keeping dame-schools, who do not receive more than £21 a-year; and that there are, therefore, both schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in England, and these not a few, some of whom receive 11s., and others not more than 8s. a week. That such persons should be capable of imparting genuine and useful instruction is hardly to be expected. Indeed, the very reverse is the truth; and it is probably within the recollection of the House that the Right Honourable Baronet called attention last session to the fact that no fewer than 700 of those who professed to be teachers of schools did not sign their names, but merely affixed their marks.”

In the debate of last session on Sir John Pakington's measure, a speech of no ordinary ability was delivered in your Lordship's hearing by the Right Honourable Mr. Henley, in which the foregoing statement in reference to Church of England schools is ably met, and the quotation from Mr. Horace Mann is shown to be modified by the sentences which follow it. To have condescended to present again to the House of Commons that quotation apart from its connexion, is unworthy of the advocate of a great question.

“It is impossible in every little village of one, two, or three hundred inhabitants, to have fine schools, but those who think with me, that it is highly requisite at all events to teach the child his duty to God and man, have been content to supply that education in those humble day-schools, in those corners which my right hon. friend does not approve; and by that means they have diffused throughout



the length and breadth of the land, such an amount of essential knowledge, which, although it comes short in the article of technical school learning, has been among the causes, under the blessing of God, of the present improved condition of the people. My right hon. friend has not been quite just upon this point; he has quoted an extract from Mr. Mann's Report, containing a statement of a nature calculated to attract the attention of the House, without having given the whole of the statement made by Mr. Mann in reference to the subject. My right hon. friend, after describing the manner in which the existing schools are scattered throughout the country, their humble character, and the places in which many of them are held, proceeded to say:

“ ‘ Mr. Mann adds these significant words:—“ In the case of 708 out of these 13,879, the returns were respectively signed by the master or mistress with a mark. Could anything show more conclusively the miserable inferiority of the system in operation in this country? ” ”

“ In common justice to Mr. Mann, another passage appended by Mr. Mann, which entirely qualifies the statement quoted by my right hon. friend, ought to have been given. Mr. Mann said:—‘ Of course, in looking at the 13,879 inferior schools, it must not be forgotten what a large proportion of the total number of scholars is composed of children under five years old, for whom a higher class of school would be of little avail.’ I think my right hon. friend ought, in common justice, to have quoted that passage, because it completely removes the effect of Mr. Mann's previous statement. It is well known that children are sent to what are called ‘ infant schools ’ at the age of one or two years; in fact, the labouring classes frequently send their children to such schools that they may be taken care of while the parents are at work, and all that is required on the part of the teacher is that she shall be a good motherly woman who will keep order among her scholars and teach them their letters. I believe it would be found, on inquiry, that more than 700 out of the number of schools to which Mr. Mann referred were of the class of infant schools.”

Referring to the statement of the Rev. H. Moseley, that, of more than 800 pupil-teachers, little more than 300 are to be found in training institutions, your Lordship remarks:—"I am bound to add that, as far as my own judgment is concerned, I cannot regard this as a very serious disadvantage. For be it remembered that these boys have passed their time most usefully in instructing others; that they have been very well instructed themselves; and that, whereas many of them have been drawn from the poorest classes of society, they are now competent to rise by industry, and by the exercise of the virtues instilled into them at school to stations, not only respectable, but of high importance."

The pupil-teacher system was introduced to provide an improved class of teachers, and hence the regret expressed by Mr. Moseley and other inspectors, that so few pupil teachers adopt the profession of teaching. The annual stipends of pupil-teachers, the payment for their instruction during an apprenticeship of five years, and their periodical examinations, have had this object in view; and the question is, whether the results to *education* have corresponded with the expenditure, not whether *other ends* have been attained. It is contended that in one important particular the expectation created by the minutes has not been realised, though it is not disputed that those who have abandoned the work of teaching may have secured personal advantages. For the sake of illustration: the opponents of State education are accustomed to say, that no failure has been more absolute, more entire, more discreditable than that of the establishment at Kneller Hall,—the only instance in which we have had Government action entirely apart from voluntary agency. The class of persons intended to receive instruction from the schoolmasters trained in this Institution were the poor unfortunates whose parents were inmates of a workhouse, and who, therefore, needed especially an industrial education. Who but Government would have thought of going to Oxford or Cambridge Universities for the most fitting men to prepare them for this work? A principal is appointed at a salary of £800 per annum, and a vice-principal at a salary of £500 per annum, with suitable residence for



each in the establishment; to which are added a first and second master. The cost of this Training Institution to the country may now be calculated with some approach to exactness. Its efficiency for the purpose intended may be judged of from the fact, that the Institution is abandoned. We set down £8,611 12s. 2¼d. as interest on £41,007, the cost of the normal school buildings, at 4 per cent. for 5½ years. We find the current expenditure during the same period to have been £21,131 19s. 1d., making a total of £29,743 11s. 3¼d. There were in all one hundred and twenty students admitted. Thirty-seven of these were resident at the time of the Parliamentary return (No. 321) “of the sum expended in the purchase and adaptation of Kneller Hall, and of the annual expenditure in support of the establishment;” and hence we do not take them into the account. Of the students who left the Institution, nineteen are not employed in the profession for which they were trained at the public cost. The forty-nine teachers who are now engaged in pauper and penal schools have cost the Treasury each £607 0s. 3d. Taking into account fifteen teachers who are engaged in other schools, the average cost of each is £464 14s. 8½d. This is regarded as a wasteful expenditure of public money, nor could it be deemed an answer to the allegation, that some individuals may have reaped important advantages—that the parties of whom the building was purchased may have made a satisfactory sale—that the architects and builders may have had remunerative employment—and that its principal officers may have had adequate salaries for duties which do not appear to have been remarkably arduous.

Your Lordship has found “a tone of despondency pervading the reports of the inspectors for 1854;” and to the passages cited the following may be added:—

FAILURES OF CERTIFICATED TEACHERS.—“The number of failures of trained masters and mistresses, with certificates, calls for special remark. I have recorded of no less than twelve, so circumstanced, most indifferent reports of their schools. This number forms a very large portion of the trained teachers of the district.”—*Rev. M. Mitchell.*

As trainers, as formers of the heart as well as of the



mind of the working-classes, as engravers of that character which should be stamped upon them, how do the certified teachers stand? They, for the most part, have one obvious and great disadvantage; they are very young when they enter upon their duties, and they have to deal with very young children. But the younger the children to be trained, the older, within certain limits, should the trainer be. He has more need of experience, of self-knowledge, of discernment in child-nature, and sympathy with child-life. He has before him a more delicate and continuous work than he who acts upon the juvenile boy or girl. From some observation, I am inclined to think that many of the certified teachers of the present day—men, perhaps, more than women—several of those especially of higher attainments, are not good trainers or managers of schools. They either trust to a sharp, but unintelligible discipline, and enforce a rule where they ought to uphold a principle, or they are altogether unobservant of little things, as if they were trifles instead of steps to great things; they often spend the school-time in lecturing rather than teaching, and in displaying their own treasures, rather than in increasing the little store of the children's knowledge.

The following letter, addressed to me by the incumbent of a populous manufacturing district, describes a case which is certainly not unique:—

“I have now a schoolmaster from ——, a young man of pleasing manners, only nineteen years of age, who was a pupil-teacher in a school at Brighton, obtained a first-class Queen's Scholarship, and is just now placed in the first class of certificated teachers; but I don't think he has much idea of conducting a school. He does not teach at all. I have watched him carefully for a month—have gone into the school at all times of the day, and my firm belief is, that he does not profess to teach. All the classes are committed to the care of a boy. Is this a new light? If not, what would you advise me to do? I have wished that you could look in accidentally some day, should you be in the neighbourhood. I am fated to have masters who avow their intentions of seeking admission into holy orders. Such is the case at present.” Certainly I have seen cases like this, and I know well the excuse made for such conduct in a school. It is called general superintendence, but it is in reality particular neglect. The good schoolmaster, alike teacher, trainer, and manager, when he is most busy in one part of the school, is by no means idle in any other part of it. His presence is felt everywhere. The children know that they

are under his observation, without turning their heads to see whether his eye be upon them.”—*Rev. F. Watkins.*

**DIMINUTION OF TEACHERS' SALARIES.**—“With the increase of certified teachers, I am surprised and sorry to find a decrease in their salaries, which, though only trifling, is (if it be not only in appearance) an unsatisfactory circumstance. The average salaries of teachers in Church schools in Yorkshire stand thus:—

1852.	1853.	1854.
Nearly £48	£51 4s. 2¼d.	£50 13s. 9½d.

These are exclusive of the grants from your Lordships' committee.

“In reference to the teachers' salaries in my district, their decrease is the more striking, as the average grant to each certified teacher from your Lordship's committee has increased from £11 in 1852, to £16 2s. 8½d. in 1854.”—*Rev. F. Watkins.*

**UNPOPULARITY OF THE PUPIL-TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP.**—“I regret, as I have more than once observed in my reports, that the apprenticeship is not popular with parents of working children. Nor does it, as it was intended, necessarily conduct its occupants to the higher grades of the scholastic profession.”—*Rev. F. Watkins.*

“Experience has proved that the cords which now bind the pupil-teacher to the profession are very weak. Every opening to other successful employment will weaken them still more. On this ground, I would submit that there is some defect in a system which requires such encouragement as this. The application of it to any other profession would go far to destroy it.”—*Rev. H. W. Bellairs.*

**RESULTS OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL IN YORKSHIRE.**—“I cannot but express my disappointment at the educational aspect of my district, as seen in the inspection of the last twelve months. It certainly is not satisfactory for the great county of York, for it really amounts to this—that the most approved means for bettering the elementary education of the working classes have been freely used; have been used, also, for a sufficient length of time to test their value; and that they have produced very little effect; that, on the whole, their effect seems to diminish rather than to increase; that, during the last year, the results of inspection bring to light very little, if any, progress in the intellectual attainments of the school children, and show no improvement in that particular by which, chiefly, intellectual progress is rendered possible, their age and length of attendance. In one of these points it would be difficult to say that there



is any advance ; in the other, there is decided retrogression since my last report. This is a very discouraging fact. For Yorkshire is not in the same position with some other parts of England, where, either for want of means, or lack of energy, the people decline to enter, or entered only of late, into the great educational struggle. It was one of the first counties to take advantage of your Lordships' minutes of 1845-46. It has continued ever since to receive a large portion of your grants. It has a larger staff of certified teachers and apprentices (reckoned together) than any other county. Of the schools which I inspected last year, only 22 per cent. were without either the one or the other of these advantages. Very nearly half the teachers, both male and female, of the schools under inspection, hold certificates of merit. Above half the schools, including those of every kind that have been inspected during the year—those even for mere infants—those in almost pauperised districts—those in out-of-the-way country villages, in short, in all those localities where there would seem to be the least chance of ability to comply with your Lordship's conditions—above half the whole number have apprentices at work in them. The school buildings are certainly not surpassed—I doubt whether they are equalled—by those of any other district of Great Britain, either in architectural beauty or internal convenience ; their furniture, books, apparatus, &c., are in general liberally supplied, and suitable for the purpose ; their managers—chiefly the clergy, on whom falls the chief burden, and to whom should be the largest share of the credit—work zealously, and in many cases intelligently, in their different spheres, and yet the result is small, very small, and, as far as can be judged, gradually decreasing. Why is this ? The answer has been given a hundred times. I have stated it over and over again in my reports. It is chiefly owing to the small age of the school children."\*—*Rev. F. Watkins.*

\* The diminishing age of children attending school is frequently alluded to by the inspectors. They probably would prescribe a compulsory law, a free education, inducements to attend in the shape of prizes, and other kinds of bounty. The evil lies with the parents. Every plan that operates to diminish parental obligation will be found to aggravate the evil. It is believed that the extent to which the teacher is made to depend, in a less degree than heretofore, on the parents, and more on extraneous support, is the chief cause of an evidently growing evil. To remedy the mischief, a much more practical system of infant-schools is needed—an education for older children, bearing more distinctly on their future success in life—a more entire sympathy between teachers and parents, which is no part of the policy of a Government scheme—a more enlightened regard to the



The evils here referred to are traced to various causes; but the remedy proposed is uniformly *one*—a larger demand on the public exchequer. An increased outlay is the unfailing resource of inspectors in every emergency, and judging from their Reports, the only limit of expenditure for educational purposes will be the willingness of Parliament to vote the necessary supplies. Very different is the task which those who repudiate State aid impose on themselves,—a task oftentimes difficult, but compensating for the difficulty in the results with which it is fraught. They have learned that the success of an educational enterprise depends less upon the aid of the benevolent than on the co-operation of those whom it is intended to benefit, and that difficulties are best overcome by increasing the interest of parents, and stimulating them to take their proper share in the work—an object only to be accomplished by elevating the standard of instruction, and especially by imparting to it a more practical character—by frequent meetings, at which the value of education, the methods of teaching adopted, and their bearing on the future prospects of the scholars, are familiarly explained—by establishing between the parents and teachers the most intimate relation—and by rendering the school the centre of all those influences which may elevate the neighbourhood in which it is situated. Such plans will produce results money cannot purchase, and of far higher value than the diminished cost of a school to its supporters. But these plans are not in operation in countries where the State provides education for the people; and they will inevitably cease in this country if the principle of free association for the promotion of education should become extinct.

The scheme embodied in the resolutions proposed by interests of society on the part of employers—and some vigorous efforts to be carried out by an agency we might designate educational missionaries, to place before parents the advantages of a due regard for the proper instruction of their offspring. The means that will be effectual, without bringing in their train evils greater than that they are employed to remedy, are not those which spring from the action of *law*; they are *moral*—the product of enlightened religious sentiment—the instrumentality which Infinite wisdom has devised for the elevation of man in the scale of intelligence and virtue.

your Lordship is, I conceive, open to objection on the following grounds :—

I. *It is based on a fallacious estimate of the extent of our educational deficiency, and on a disregard of the fact, that this deficiency has been for a considerable period rapidly diminishing.*

“ Admitting that there are 2,000,000 scholars at school between 5 and 15 years of age, out of a total number of 4,000,000 children within those ages, is it to be assumed, that the remaining 2,000,000 children *never* attend school, and grow up *in total ignorance*? It is obvious, that there could not be 4,000,000 children at school, *unless every individual child in the country from 5 to 15 years of age was attending school the entire TEN YEARS.* But from numerous causes, more or less satisfactory, there must be a very large proportion of children whom it would be vain to expect to see attending school for ten full years. It becomes an important practical question what number of years may be regarded as a fair average length of schooling. Few practical men would demand an *average* of seven years’ schooling above five years. Taking into account the large number of children who, from various causes, are *prevented* from attending school, an actual education of *seven* years enjoyed generally by such children as are able to attend school would, perhaps, not amount to more than an *average* of *six* years, founded on the whole number of children of the school age. Now, if there are 4,005,716 children between 5 and 15 years old, an average of 6 years would give 2,403,429 who should be at school. The number actually at school between those ages is 1,768,231 according to one of the Census returns, and about 2,000,000 according to the other. To show that our estimate is liberal, we may add to the number of scholars whom we have assumed as proper, between the ages of 5 and 15, namely, 2,403,429—the 278,617 scholars below 5 years of age, and the 97,530 above 15 years. The total would then be 2,779,556; which would give 1 scholar to every  $6\frac{1}{2}$  (6·45) of the population. Now, the proportion of scholars in Prussia is 1 to every  $6\frac{1}{3}$  (6·33) inhabitants.”



“The existing deficiency of education does not prove that any considerable number of children are “*without education*,” or wholly uneducated, but only that the education is *for a shorter term* than is desirable. The number of children of the school age (from 5 to 15) being 4,000,000, and the number found in school being 2,000,000 ; this gives an average of 5 years’ schooling for every child in England. It is not that half of the children are at school for the whole 10 years, and the other half never at school at all ; it is, that *nearly the whole of the children go to school*, but remain there only so long as to average 5 years for the entire number.” \*

The real question for consideration is, whether past progress warrants an expectation that any existing deficiency is being supplied by the people themselves, and will be met by the energy which has already achieved so much. On this point the statements of the right honourable member for Oxfordshire are most pertinent.

“In 1818, the number of day-scholars amounted to 1 in 17·25 ; in 1833, to 1 in 11·27 ; and in 1851, to 1 in 8·36. There has also been a remarkable addition to the number of Sunday-scholars—an addition, the value of which cannot be too highly appreciated as a means of arresting the progress of crime. In 1818, the number of Sunday-scholars was 1 in 24·40 ; in 1833, 1 in 9·28 ; and in 1851, 1 in 7·45. This is a remarkable statement, and ought not to be lost sight of in the consideration of this question.† I believe that in this country children go to work at an earlier age than in foreign countries with which a comparison as to education has been made, and therefore our Sunday-school education should have greater weight attached to it than is ordinarily the case in making these comparisons. It is, perhaps, not possible to obtain precise information as to the

\* Mr. Edward Baines.

† The Sunday-school system is a peculiarity of this country. It does not obtain on the Continent. Where, as in some of the manufacturing parts of Switzerland, children are collected for instruction on the Sabbath, secular knowledge is imparted. How far the establishment of a national system of education would tend to the destruction of Sunday-schools is a question demanding the most serious consideration.



number of children who are day-scholars as well as Sunday-scholars; but still it is a vast element in our system, and, in my belief, is producing an enormous amount of benefit, not only by the high morality which it imparts to the scholars, but by bringing in contact with each other the higher and lower ranks of society, knitting them together in the bonds of goodwill and mutual esteem, in a manner and to a degree that is not likely to be secured in any other way. Having shown that education has increased and is increasing up to this point, I must observe that we know from the returns of some of the religious societies, that its march is not at all likely to be stopped."

Your Lordship alluded to Scotland. In estimating the past progress of education in England and its probable increase in the future, the facts mentioned by the honourable member for Bolton ought not to be overlooked:— "Scotland had long possessed a great advantage in the zeal of her clergy, who from the time of John Knox to the present, had been impressed with a high sense of the importance of education, and had endeavoured to enforce it upon the people. In England, down to a recent period, that had not been the case, but was so now. The clergy now were zealous and energetic in the cause of education, and he believed that voluntary efforts would be so universal, that if the House were to refuse all grants for the future, education would go on advancing as rapidly as the circumstances of the people would allow."

II. *It will inflict great social injustice, by the appointment of a large staff of sub-inspectors charged to report on a deficiency of educational means; since the efforts of private teachers and of all organizations not submitting to Government inspection will, in all probability, be depreciated or altogether ignored.*

The resolutions relating to this subject are:—

"That it is expedient to add to the present inspectors of Church schools eighty sub-inspectors, and to divide England and Wales into eighty divisions, for the purposes of education." "That it is expedient to appoint sub-inspectors of British, Wesleyan, and other Protestant schools not con-

nected with the Church, and also of Roman Catholic schools, according to the present proportions of inspectors of such schools to the inspectors of Church schools." "That, on the report of the inspectors and sub-inspectors, the Committee of Privy Council should have power to form in each division school districts, consisting of single or united parishes, or parts of parishes." "That the sub-inspectors of schools of each division should be instructed to report on the available means for the education of the poor in each school district."

To what extent will Sub-Inspectors be empowered to take cognizance of uninspected schools, whether private or public? By what process is their efficiency to be ascertained? By what standard are they to be judged? Are those who derive no pecuniary advantages under the Minutes of Council to be subjected to the intrusion of the sub-inspector? Is this to be with the consent of the parties in question, or is he to be armed with a warrant empowering him to exercise surveillance over every educational establishment? Is it to be presumed that the class to be instituted, and to whom "it may not," it is said, "be necessary to give any very high rate of payment," will be infallible judges of the merits of all who are engaged in the profession of teaching throughout the country? In reference to educational methods, great differences of opinion exist, and as the subject is more studied opinions will be still more divided. The reports of the Inspectors exhibit conflicting views, and, both as to the subject-matter of instruction and the means of mental discipline, unanimity is not attainable, and possibly not desirable. Any attempt to carry out one system—to apply to localities very differently circumstanced one standard, would be unjust to teachers and injurious to the community.

It is, however, with regret that I notice in your Lordship's exposition of the plan indications sufficiently obvious, that it is intended to regard with little favour schools not submitting to the established régime. This appears in the statement given of adequately instructed children, as represented by the attendance at *inspected*



schools. In districts reported to be deficient, your Lordship states, that "it may be that, in many of these parishes and districts, there will be a willingness on the part of the owners of land, and the inhabitants generally, to build schools, and to introduce the *present system* of education." The want must then be supplied by schools according to the "present system;" private enterprise—voluntary effort—a combination of parents to discharge their proper duty, will not avail; the deficiency can only be met by building schools for the further extension of the Government scheme. This, indeed, is but a natural operation of the plan. No one can think of the whole country divided into small districts, each with its Church of England, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, and British School Sub-Inspector, whose occupation will be, not to stimulate the population to the discharge of duty, but to destroy the spirit of self-reliance, to undermine the influence of schools supported solely by the payments of parents and the contributions of benevolence, and to make out a case for State interference without foreseeing that the present system is designed to absorb all other agencies. Is this just? Are those who have brought the education of the country to what it now is—who, against much opposition, have claimed for the poorest the advantages of instruction, and to this object have given liberally time, and labour, and money,—entitled to no consideration? Are those, whose judgment and conscience forbid participation in the Parliamentary grant—who object to Government interference in education, not from indifference to the moral and intellectual elevation of the people, but from a deep conviction that such interference is injurious to the object it is designed to promote, and irreconcilable with the expanding freedom of a great people—to be put down by the strong arm of law? Are those who have qualified themselves for teaching, and in almost every village are occupying positions of respectability and usefulness, to be superseded, and is the liberty of teaching no longer to exist? The spirit of the English people, the growth of constitutional freedom, the slow but sure progress of that glorious struggle which established, the "*liberty of*



*prophesying*," inspire the hope that the *liberty of teaching* will not be surrendered; and if Parliament, blind to the consequences of your Lordship's scheme, should allow this right to be invaded, a new controversy will arise, not less momentous than that which occupies so prominent a place in the history of the past, and a spirit will be evoked not less determined, because not less conscientious.

III. *It will lead to an enormous increase of local and general taxation.*

Your Lordship claims education for 3,600,000 children, estimating the cost at 18s. per head, or £3,240,000 per annum. But this calculation, derived from Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, is exclusive of Government grants, which average about 10s. per head.\* This raises the annual cost to £5,040,000. To this must be added repairs of school buildings, say £500,000,† the expense of administration and inspection, £739,721, calculated according to the present scale of expenditure‡ and the annual cost of Training Institutions now amounting to £44,000. Thus, not taking into account the outlay for new buildings, an annual revenue will be required of £3,323,721.

This income is to be raised "by subscriptions, by school pence, by Parliamentary grants, by charitable endowments, and rates." What may accrue from *endowments*, I have no means of determining; how far the present *school fees* will be maintained under a system largely depending on taxation, is most questionable, especially as in one of the resolutions "a diminution of school fees" is proposed; but it is certain that the amount of taxation the scheme necessitates will gradually diminish, and ultimately destroy, *voluntary subscriptions*. The history of Nonconformist chapels with endowments of various amounts—the worst supported in the country—might be cited as proof of the way in which liberality is checked by a provision secured by law; and to how much greater extent will the present supporters of schools relax exertion when it is known, that

\* Minutes of Council, 1853-4, page 73, Table 6.

† Letter of J. C. Colquhoun, Esq.

‡ Minutes of Council, 1854-5, page 132.

any deficiency will be made up by the Parliamentary grant, or a local rate. How generally the rate may be levied is uncertain; it is more than conjectured that the agency of upwards of a hundred sub-inspectors will make it co-extensive with the country, since, if the rate-payers are not willing to tax themselves "on or before January 1, 1858, the Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the county, city, or borough shall have power to impose a school-rate for the erection and maintenance of a school or schools, when any school district shall have been declared by the Committee of Privy Council to be deficient in adequate means for the education of the poor." Is it to be supposed that a subscription-list and a rating-paper for the same object can coexist? "It would be difficult," says Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, "that any man of Parliamentary experience could gravely propose that local municipal boards should be invested with power to establish rate-supported schools in every parish, with whatever constitution, to the inevitable destruction of schools of religious communions." The inevitable result of the scheme will be a burden of taxation amounting to upwards of SIX TO SEVEN MILLIONS!

IV. *It will involve serious difficulties in connexion with the moral and religious training of the young.*

"On the whole, I am quite clear," says Dr. Arnold, "as to my original position—namely, that if you once get off from the purely natural ground of physical science, philology, and pure logic,—the moment, in short, on which you enter any moral subject, whether moral philosophy or history—you must either be Christian or anti-Christian; for you touch upon the ground of Christianity, and you must either take it as your standard of moral judgment, or you must renounce it, and either follow another standard or have no standard at all. In other words again, the moment you touch on what alone is education—the forming of the moral principles and habits of man—neutrality is impossible. It would be very possible if Christianity consisted really in a set of theoretical truths, as many seem to fancy; but it is not possible, inasmuch as it claims to be the paramount arbiter of all our moral judgments; and he who judges of good and evil,



right and wrong, without reference to its authority, virtually denies it." In these words, quoted by your Lordship, the recognition of religion as an essential element in education, is vindicated by unanswerable argument, and its exclusion by force of law would debar from public teaching all persons of decided religious convictions—for a religious man must educate religiously.

The plan proposed in the resolutions demands the most serious consideration.

1. "*In every school supported in whole or in part by rates, a portion of the Holy Scriptures shall be read daily in the school.*"—This is the only condition obligatory on rate-supported schools; and any version, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and other versions will be allowed. This is not a plan which a Christian parent would deem adequate for training up his children "in the way they should go"; and can it be regarded as satisfactory for the children of others?\*

2. "*Such other provision shall be made for religious instruction as the school committee may think fit.*"—Is a Committee elected by rate-payers likely to attain unanimity on the subject of religious instruction? or, if unanimity be secured, will it not be by the elimination of everything distinctive of the Christian faith? The working of parish

\* I am at a loss to understand the object of the following passage in your Lordship's speech:—"There has been a dispute between the British and Foreign School Society and the body of the Unitarians as to their mode of teaching. The British and Foreign School Society declared, from the commencement, that their schools were schools for all; that they should have the Bible read and taught in their schools, but that they would not adopt any formula either of the church or any particular denomination. The Unitarian body then said: 'It is true that is your rule, but the order of instruction you give touches certain distinctive doctrines of Christianity from which we dissent, and, therefore, you do not carry those views of perfect equality which you profess into effect.' The British and Foreign School Society replied, 'that they had only taught that which they thought the plain meaning of the Bible in the lessons they read; but it is obvious, that in teaching they do not deny that they do teach those distinctive doctrines which separate the Church and all those bodies of Dissenters called Orthodox Dissenters from the Unitarians. Therefore, in this case, that Society seems to give the utmost latitude by only reading the Scriptures.'"



boards created by the Cemetery Act indicates too plainly that school committees elected by rate-payers will be involved in strifes detrimental to religion, injurious to the peace of neighbourhoods, and little likely to secure the extension of religious education.

This provision involves the equal support of all forms of religious belief, thus setting aside the supremacy of truth, and creating a new religious establishment more extensive than the present one. A system of national education is insisted upon because there exists much indifferent teaching of *secular* knowledge. Is it, then, of less moment what the young are taught concerning God and his moral government, that they are to be handed over, as far as public provision can do so, to *any kind of religious* instruction? Your Lordship, as the advocate of civil and religious liberty, has asserted for all opinions indifferently, perfect freedom of utterance; but this principle has no analogy to the latitudinarian spirit which would stretch forth a helping hand to every variety of theological belief. If there be religious truth, we are bound to labour for its diffusion as such; and what, as individuals, we may not do to weaken its position, we may not as a confederacy of individuals, or, in other words, as a State. Your Lordship's proposal does violence to the conscience, not of this man only, or of that, but of every man in the kingdom who has a conscience for truth. The subsidizing of all religious denominations through the school, may become a precedent for the payment out of public resources of the ministers of religion of all denominations—a result which could not fail to be most calamitous to our country. "No nation," it has been well observed, "can be great, or remain so, without a real and predominant faith in somewhat distinctive—somewhat to fire their enthusiasm, nerve their energies, and master and direct their will; virtue was never yet born of generalities or negatives—it must be cradled in the heart; and the heart takes cognizance of nothing which is not to it individual and definite. When all creeds come to be publicly supported, none will be cared for as divine."

3. "No child shall be compelled to receive any religious

*instruction, or attend any religious worship, to which his or her parents, or guardians, shall, on conscientious grounds, object.*”—The scheme professes to be one for religious education. How will it operate? Supposing, in a district declared deficient, the Church of England has a naked majority, the School Committee or Quarter Sessions would establish a church school. To it the children of members of the Church of England, of Protestant Dissenters, of Roman Catholics, and of Jews, will of right, equally resort. But resorting to the school, that there may be no violation of conscience, they will get no religious education; and yet this is called a system of religious education!

The only guarantee for the religious education of the young, is the religious principles and character of the teacher. “Foreign schools,” says Mr. Colquhoun, “teach religion as a branch of knowledge. But boys are not made good by learning sacred history, or getting by heart a creed. What they want are motives to act, and powers of self-restraint. These can only be gained through practical religion—religion taught by men who reverence it. I don’t say that this is done always in our English schools, but it is aimed at; it is the governing idea, and it gives our schools their moral power. Why we have it, and foreign schools have it not, is, that the latter are managed by men indifferent to religion; our schools are managed by those who, whether laymen or ministers of religion, have this object in view.” “I trust,” says Dr. Candlish, “that we shall start with the conviction, that the excellence of a school lies in the schoolmaster. Rules are nothing—the man is everything.” Now, my Lord, your measure fails in this vital point. It gives no guarantee as to the religious character of the teacher. This is an affair Government cannot deal with; attainments may be tested by examinations,—moral character may be ascertained by testimonials, but the State has no test to which it can subject the living principle of piety.

The Committee of Privy Council has its plan for providing the future teachers of this country: boys and girls selected at the age of 13, are destined to the office of teaching, and after an apprenticeship of five years; a certain amount of attain-



ment, and testimonials of moral character, secure admission into a Training Institution. Nothing more is required, and if required, the requisition would be unavailing. To these persons the education of this country is to be committed. Men and women of matured character, moved to this work by the highest motives, who, by the testimony of Mr. Moseley, have proved "the best and most dedicated teachers," will be excluded, by a class, it may be of skilful professional teachers, but wanting the great requisites for forming the character and disciplining the hearts of the young. What will be gained in intellectual power will be as "the small dust of the balance," compared with the loss of moral influence.

*V. It will bring into operation an extensive system of centralization, the evils of which are demonstrated by the condition of Continental nations; and create an immense amount of patronage, capable of being worked for widely different purposes.*

On the evils of centralization, the Chevalier Bunsen, in a recent work, has given the following important testimony:—  
 "I confess, as a German and a Prussian, not without sorrow, that experience and reflection have convinced me of the truth of the political principle, that THE SYSTEM OF CENTRALIZATION IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE TO TRUE FREEDOM, AND IS A SYSTEM WHICH, IN THE LONG RUN, WEAKENS MORE THAN IT STRENGTHENS THAT AUTHORITY OF THE STATE IN BEHALF OF WHICH IT IS MAINTAINED. By centralization I mean the common Continental system of governing merely by Government officials. The necessary operation of this system is to keep the people in perpetual tutelage, to interdict them from performing the slightest function of public life on their own motion, and to prevent the existence of any social organism alongside of itself, and specially to repress that independent life which naturally belongs to every healthy Christian congregation."\* In accordance with these views, M. F. Bastiat, the antagonist of Communism in France, has thus expressed himself: "Cast your eye over the globe. Which are the happiest,

\* The Signs of the Times.



the most moral, and the most peaceable nations? Those where the law interferes the least with private activity; where the government is the least felt; where individuality has the most scope, and public opinion the most influence; where the machinery of the administration is the least important and the least complicated; where taxation is lightest and least unequal, popular discontent the least excited and the least justifiable; where the responsibility of individuals and classes is the most active, and where, consequently, if morals are not in a perfect state, at any rate they tend incessantly to correct themselves; where transactions, meetings, and associations are the least fettered; where labour, capital, and production suffer the least from artificial displacements; where mankind follows most completely its own natural course; where the thought of God prevails the most over the inventions of men; those, in short, who realize the most nearly this idea, that within the limits of right all should flow from the free, perfectible, and voluntary action of man; nothing be attempted by the law or by force, except the administration of universal justice."\*

Your Lordship can scarcely have realized the amount of political patronage your scheme will place in the hands of the proposed Minister of Public Instruction. The education of 3,600,000 children on "the present plan" will require at least 36,000 teachers, 90,000 pupil-teachers, and a considerable number of school-assistants. To these must be added the officers of Training Institutions, the inspectors and sub-inspectors, the official staff of the Council Office, and whatever agency may be required by rate-supported schools. On a moderate calculation one hundred and thirty thousand persons will be connected with this department of public service; and, taking into account the connexions and friends of these employés, will not a thoughtful mind see in this amount of patronage cause of apprehension? Is it an idle fear that the purity of election will be interfered with, and that a time may come when the liberties of the people will be endangered?

\* Essays on Political Economy.

VI. *It will create a rate as objectionable in principle as the existing church-rate, which has spread so much discontent through the land, and the removal of which now occupies the attention of the Legislature.*

As your Lordship dissents from the proposition, "that to compel a Dissenter to pay church-rates is a hardship from which he ought to be relieved," it is not surprising that the church-rate principle should appear in your educational project. On this point the following opinion of the Right Hon. Mr. Henley, on a similar feature in the measure of Sir John Pakington, is entitled to serious consideration:—"Another objection which I entertain to this Bill—and it is an objection to the principle—is, that I altogether object to a rate of the sort proposed. I believe that it will just bring into existence a second—I was going to say a curse, but I will not use that term—but a second evil of the same nature as that for which we have all for so many years been trying to find a remedy, namely, the evil of church-rates. It will, indeed, be unfortunate if we should create another such element of vexation and heart-burning in every parish. Indeed, I believe that this proposed burden will give rise to an aggravated feeling of dissatisfaction in consequence of its being a new burden. Many persons will bear a burden long established by usage, who will nevertheless resist as unjust one newly put on. I think I can show to the House that the working of this measure in places where there are to be found persons of different religious persuasions, must be to affect the conscience of people at least just as much as the question of church-rates does at present; and if that be the case, the bill will give rise to the same opposition and heart-burning, and even to more, on account of the newness of the imposition."

"Do you think that any one living in a parish where a school under this bill is set up, wishing as most persons do, a religious education for their children, and being taxed for an establishment from which their children derived no benefit of that sort, will pay the tax with pleasure? I repeat, that in my opinion this will be just as great a source of heart-burning as the church-rate now is."



My Lord, will not a public provision for primary instruction deaden the sense of parental responsibility, and inflict serious moral injury on the poor, by taking from them the inducement to provide education at their own cost, thus encouraging pauperism of the worst description? Will it not destroy that competition which gives to education a more vital energy, and a higher character than governmental supervision can secure? Will it not depreciate in general estimation the value of education, since experience proves that any thing obtained with little effort is lightly regarded? Will it not be fatal to that spirit of self-reliance, which more than any other virtue has been our characteristic as a nation, and the main element in that industrial and political progress which has distinguished us in comparison with other European people? Will it not be a departure from the principles of commercial freedom adopted in this country as the basis of future legislation? \* Will it not

\* "It is a great truth," says Mr. Laing in his Norway and the Duchies, "that in education, as in everything else, supply follows demand; and that a people will always, and under all circumstances, educate themselves, or *find education for themselves*, up to the demand and necessity for knowledge and educated labour among them; and that a forced supply of learning, or educated labour, beyond what the social state of a country requires, and can fairly and naturally use and employ, is altogether as opposed to the true principles of social economy and of free trade as a forced supply of bodily labour by Government encouragement, or by legal compulsion, would be in the labour market. The state of Germany, and of France, clearly proves this truth in social philosophy. The governments are obliged to create offices and employments for their educated men at the expense of the civil rights and freedom of the people; and to rear educated men at their national schools and universities to fill those unnecessary offices which they have created, and cannot suppress. The supply of intellectual labour exceeds the natural demand or use for it, and the excess of scholarship, produced by Government encouragement, is an evil, not a good, to the community. The result would be similar if it were shoemaking or carpenter work that Government encouraged and took out of the wholesome and natural law of supply and demand. Free-trade in education is of more importance to society than free-trade in corn or cotton goods. The result, in Germany of giving a monopoly of the educational means of a country to educational boards, and their primary schools, gymnasia, pro-gymnasia, and universities, and allowing none but their licensed teachers to give instruction to the people, has been to



give a sanction to the communistic principles which have convulsed European society? Will it not, to realize its professed design, require that attendance at school should be enforced by compulsory enactments—the logical conclusion of a system of State education, but which, alien to the spirit of the English people, will provoke the resistance its degrading character deserves? \* Will it not paralyze the efforts of benevolence to which this country in regard to all its highest interests is so largely indebted, experience proving that legal provision diminishes the resources of voluntary liberality?

In opposition to the principles of the resolutions, which, should they prove as successful as the most sanguine anticipate, will bring into existence evils affecting the vital interests of society, I maintain, *that national education ought to be the work of the people themselves, since the training of children is essentially the duty of parents, a responsibility they cannot neglect, or devolve on any classes, sects, or parties in the community, without guilt and injury to themselves—that the true purposes of education would be defeated, if on the one hand parents should be compelled to educate their offspring, or on the other, should succeed in compelling their fellow-citizens to provide for them the means of instruction—that the function of enlightened patriotism and Christian benevolence in relation to this question, is to enforce on parents the duty of educating their children, to elevate by all available*

raise a power within the State, governing the people, as the Roman Catholic clergy did in the middle ages, by the monopoly of education, and by the visions and prejudices they infuse, exempt from all opposition or counteracting influences from other teachers, and who, in 1848, shook every Continental throne by their schemes, their social influence, and the false education they had been giving to the youth of Germany.

\* Some approximation to a compulsory law appears in resolution 11:—“That employers of children and young persons between 9 and 15 years of age shall be required to furnish certificates half-yearly of the attendance of such children and young persons at school, and to pay for such instruction.” The hon. member for Oxfordshire well observed, “that, as the noble Lord did not propose to couple this obligation with any enactment making it compulsory on masters to employ the labour of children, it was difficult to understand how his system would promote what appeared to be the great desideratum—the necessary education of the people.”

*means the tone of popular thinking on this subject,—to assist suitable persons in fitting themselves for the profession of teaching, and to aid the really needy in their efforts to discharge a sacred obligation.*

Your Lordship distrusts the principle of “voluntary association.” That principle, however, has its history—rich in deeds of noble daring and self-sacrifice—and can produce its triumphs in art, in science, in discovery, in commercial enterprises, and in efforts of benevolence which have embraced every form of human suffering. Nor have the greatness of its power and the vastness of its resources been less signally displayed in the advancement of the intellectual and religious interests of humanity. Its capabilities are attracting the attention of other lands; of this the following passage, from the work of the Chevalier Bunsen already quoted, affords a striking illustration:—

“On my return to my own country last summer, after fourteen years’ absence in England, I began to compare the impressions with which I had left Germany, with the more ripe views which, through more extended study, and a more large experience I had obtained; and in doing so I found my mind’s eye fixed on two phenomena which stood forward as signs of the times, both by the extensiveness of their operation, and by the pregnancy of their significance. I mean the power of free spontaneous association on the one hand, and on the other the rising claims and increased power of the clergy or hierarchy. The principle of voluntary association, to speak of this first, has been for a long time active in England; and there is in and about London, and in Great Britain generally, scarcely any great movement or public work, of which the roots are not to be sought in that principle. From an association of merchants and capitalists, has, within a single century, arisen the British Empire in India, one of the greatest in the world. The free State of America rose principally out of free Christian congregations and other English associations, and the germs of a Canadian union are even now visible, which, through the power of this principle, is destined to play no unimportant part in the theatre of the world. What else but association has, in the

course of two decades, called into existence the gigantic works of railway communication, which completely throw into the shade the most important undertakings in the shape of roads and canals, that formerly were the boast of princes and states—works, the construction of which has required more capital than the revenues of all the kingdoms of the world? What other principle than this has, during the same period in England, achieved the erection of more new churches and chapels, with congregations of earnest worshippers, than all the governments of Europe and all the clergy had been able to erect during the last four centuries? Whence is this phenomenon? is it a product of the most recent time, a child of the present century, at least of the last eighty years, a shoot of the great modern industrial movement, or a conquest made for us by the philosophy of the last century, and our so much bepraised ‘modern civilization?’ Not at all. The history of England proves the contrary.”

My Lord, I claim education as the work of the people from a conviction that its accomplishment, without appeal to the State, will furnish an example most needed in the times in which we live—and that, as a people, we may *thus*, in a sense more important than words can express, maintain our ancient “precedence,” and “teach the nations how to live.”

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship’s most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM J. UNWIN.

The College, Homerton,

March 31st, 1856.